

POLICY

For all wards 14 years of age, regardless of where they are living, the juvenile justice specialist (JJS) must enter in the case plan, initial service plan (ISP) or updated service plan (USP) and/or supplemental report a written transitional living plan

PURPOSE

To prepare the ward for functional independence at the time of discharge.

AUTHORITY

The Social Welfare Act, 1939 PA 280, as amended, MCL 400.115a(1) (I).

PROCEDURE

Independent living is an acceptable long range goal for wards age 14 years and older. However, it is an appropriate living arrangement only if the ward is 16 years or older. Every effort must be made to limit the use of these programs by exploring all other possible permanent placements, i.e., own home, relatives, legal guardian, etc.

**Desired
Achievements**

Desired achievements by the youth which should be indicated in the transitional living plan include, but are not limited to:

- Information on how to obtain and maintain adequate housing in the community.
- Vocational training.
- Ability to manage resources.
- Sufficient living skills to live on independently.
- Realistic goals and expectations.
- Interpersonal relationships, formulating positive friendships, dating, etc.
- Economic self-sufficiency (youth must have sufficient income to support self independently).

The DHS-4527, Independent Living Agreement form (see RFF 4527), must be used for an independent living arrangement. A copy of the agreement must be given to the ward.

The supervisor must review and approve the written independent living agreement for a ward before the independent living placement can be authorized regardless of funding source, (DHS allowance or self-support).

Payments

(See FOM 903-5, Independent Living for procedures authorizing Independent Living Payments.)

Child Agency Placing Rules

Child Placing Agency Rules 401, 407, 411 and 416 outline the documentation requirements, recording requirements, and contractual requirements for wards in independent living. These rules are as follows:

Note: "Agency" includes DHS local offices.

R400.12501, Agency authorization before placing children in independent living:

Rule 501 Before placing wards in independent living, an agency shall be authorized by the agency to make such placements.

R400.12504, Basis for Placement.

Rule 504. An Agency shall document all of the following for each ward placed in independent living:

- (a) The basis for concluding that a youth exhibits self-care potential.
- (b) That the youth's social service worker has personally observed and determined that the living situation is safe.
- (c) The availability of specific and relevant resources that may provide for suitable social, physical, vocational, and emotional needs of a youth.
- (d) An evaluation of a youth's need for supervision. The JJS maintains sufficient regular contact with the ward, in per-

son, by phone or through collaterals, to enable the provision of adequate oversight and support. **At least one face-to-face contact is to be made each month.**

- (e) Proof that financial support to meet the youth's housing, clothing, food, and miscellaneous expenses is available.

R400.12509, Record.

Rule 509. An agency shall maintain a record for each ward placed in independent living. The record shall contain all of the following:

- (a) Name, social security number, address and telephone number, date of birth, sex, race, height, weight, hair color, eye color, identifying marks, and a photograph updated on an annual basis.
- (b) Documentation of the agency's legal right to place the ward.
- (c) Names, addresses, dates of birth, and social security numbers of the youth's parents, if any.
- (d) The names, dates of birth, and addresses of the youth's siblings, if any.
- (e) The names and addresses of any offspring.
- (f) The names and addresses of any other significant persons.
- (g) Current documentation of financial support sufficient to meet the youth's housing, clothing, food, and miscellaneous expenses.
- (h) The date, location, documented purpose, and a summary of the findings of each contact between the youth and the social service worker.
- (i) Current adjustment.
- (j) The youth's relationship with family members and agency efforts to resolve family conflicts.
- (k) A mutually agreed upon contract between the youth and the agency which specifies the responsibilities of the agency and the youth and which is signed and dated by

the youth and the social service worker. The contract shall be reviewed and updated at least once every 90 calendar days and a copy provided to the youth.

- (l) An Agency shall maintain the record for not less than three years after the agency's termination of services to the youth.

Shelter Care

Agency shelter homes are located throughout the state and are available to state wards under agency supervision and court jurisdiction for transition status until a placement is obtained.

Referrals to shelter care are to be made by the JJS to specific shelter home staff. The JJS has the responsibility for conveying wards, assuring adequate clothing for wards in care and developing long range planning for them.

Wards must not remain in shelter care beyond 30 calendar days except in unusual case situations.